

PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of

Frederique SEGOND et al.

Group Art Unit: 2626

Application No.: 10/065,443

Examiner: A. ARMSTRONG

Filed: October 18, 2002

Docket No.: 128831

For: SYSTEM FOR LEARNING A LANGUAGE

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In reply to the March 5, 2008 Office Action, and further to the April 1, 2008 personal interview, reconsideration of the rejections is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks.

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in this application.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies shown to Applicants' representative by Examiner Armstrong during the April 1, 2008 personal interview. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

I. The Claims Are Patentable Over The Applied References

The Office Action (1) rejects claims 1-4, 7, 10-12, 14 and 17-20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,741,833 to McCormick et al. (McCormick) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,234,802 to Pella et al. (Pella); and (2) rejects claims 5-6, 8-9, 13 and 15-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over McCormick in view of Pella, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,043,483 to Murakami. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

Regarding independent claims 1 and 19-20, McCormick fails to disclose or suggest (1) "a virtual reality subsystem for representing the scenario in a physical setting in a user interface operating on each user system connected to the learning system" (claim 1) and "representing the scenario in a physical setting in a user interface" (claims 19-20); (2) "a set of linguistic tools for receiving and disambiguating an identified term in specified text received from one of the connected user systems" (claim 1) and "receiving and disambiguating an identified term in specified text received from one of the connected user systems" (claims 19-20); (3) "a search subsystem for retrieving information on the network related to the specified text" (claim 1) and "retrieving information on the network related to the specified text" (claims 19-20); and (4) "wherein the set of linguistic tools disambiguates the identified term in the information retrieved by the search subsystem to identify example uses having a meaning similar to the identified term in the specified text to aid the users of the user systems to comprehend the text communicated in the language over the at least one channel" (claim 1 and similarly recited in claims 19-20).

McCormick discloses a system 2 for teaching foreign languages by presenting users (players 40) with games and cooperative assignments (col. 3, line 64 - col. 4, line 2). The system 2 has a learning activity platform having chat displays 88 (for player 1) and 88' (for player 2) (Fig. 2) allowing communication between players. In operation, each player 40 selects a desired learning activity (Fig. 3, step 104) and must wait until he or she is matched with other players 40 (col. 8, lines 18-21). Once matches are made between players 40, one or more communication channels is provided by which the players 40 can communicate during completion of the learning activity (col. 8, lines 30-40).

The Office Action acknowledges that McCormick fails to disclose feature (1) above of a virtual reality system, but cites to Pella, discussed below, as curing this deficiency.

McCormick fails to disclose feature (2) quoted above because, while the Office Action cites to Fig. 3, step 128; col. 2, lines 29-31; and col. 10, line 61 to col. 11, line 53 as disclosing feature (2), these sections do not disclose the claimed features. McCormick discloses, at step 128 "providing supplemental info" (Fig. 3), the system provides a player 40 "with sufficient information and materials (e.g., drawing tools, text and voice exchange capabilities) to accomplish the objective". Because drawing tools, text exchange capabilities, and voice exchange capabilities are not linguistic tools, McCormick fails to disclose that any linguistic tools are provided in step 128. McCormick discloses, at col. 2, lines 29-31, that instructions, hints, clues, or responses can help participants complete the objective. However, this section is silent regarding any linguistic tools, "for receiving and disambiguating an identified term in specified text" received from a user, as claimed. McCormick discloses, at col. 10, line 66 - col. 11, line 53, that participants can play a "spatial game" in which players can assemble objects 184 from the object container 182 and can put them in an assembly area 178 (Figs. 5A, 5B). Again, in this section, McCormick fails to disclose or suggest "for receiving and disambiguating an identified term in specified text" as claimed.

During the personal interview, Examiner Armstrong cited to col. 9, lines 19-20 as disclosing a vocabulary list of words and alleged that the vocabulary list corresponds to feature (2) above. However, as explained at the personal interview, the vocabulary list is disclosed as being provided as an activity support; the vocabulary list is not a set of linguistic tools and is not provided to disambiguate any identified term in specified text received from a user system.

McCormick fails to disclose feature (3) quoted above because, while the Office Action cites to Fig. 3, step 128; col. 2, lines 29-31; col. 8, lines 24-30; and col. 8, line 66 to col. 9, line 26 as disclosing feature (3), these sections do not disclose the claimed features. McCormick fails to disclose feature (3) because, in relation to step 128 (Fig. 3), McCormick only discloses providing drawing tools, text, and video exchange capabilities (col. 9, lines 11-14), not that information is retrieved from a network related to specified text. At col. 2, lines 29-31, McCormick discloses providing instructions, hints, clues, and responses, but does not disclose that this is done by retrieving information from a network relating to specified text. At col. 8, lines 24-30, McCormick discloses that a multimedia presentation can be presented to a player 40. However, this is done during the "waiting session" while the player 40 is waiting to be paired with other players in order to play a game. Thus, this presentation is not provided in response to specified text as claimed. At col. 8, line 66 - col. 9, line 26, McCormick discloses again presenting drawing tools, text, and voice exchange capabilities as well as providing guiding instructions, hints, clues, and feedback. However, McCormick fails to disclose or suggest that any of this is done in response to specified text as claimed.

Regarding feature (4) above, the Office Action does not provide cites for where the feature is allegedly disclosed in McCormick. Instead, the Office Action alleges that this feature would have been obvious over McCormick. However, the Office Action is engaging in impermissible hindsight. As acknowledged by the Office Action, McCormick fails to

disclose feature (4) above. Providing example uses similar in meaning to an identified term is a very different action than providing hints, clues, and feedback relating to an objective (col. 9, lines 14-16). One of ordinary skill in the art would have understood hints and clues to be aids that provide assistance to a user in completing the objective and would have understood feedback to be help provided in response to the user's own actions or input. Neither corresponds to providing example uses of specified text in communications from other users as claimed. Further, McCormick is silent as to any specifying of text in any connotation.

Pella is cited as disclosing a virtual reality system. However, Pella fails to cure McCormick's deficiencies of features (2), (3) and (4).

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants request withdrawal of the rejections.

II. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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